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CONFIDENTIAL

A

Await Chief Secretary

Prime Minister

NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE MANPOWER AFTER 1984

1. This minute is to seek your agreement to announcing the results of the work which I set in hand on manpower levels within Northern Ireland Departments, in parallel with that undertaken in Whitehall, of which the outcome was announced on 17 November 1983.
2. In common with GB Departments we have adopted a bottom-up approach based on the situation of the 6 individual Departments. Our assessment has included examination of the scope for a further extension of contracting out and privatisation and has also taken account of possible changes which might exceptionally call for increases in staff.
3. Completion of the work had to await the outcome of the exercise in Great Britain since in some cases the parity effects of decisions taken by GB Departments have implications for Northern Ireland and are therefore reflected in the new targets. Overall the reduction in the Northern Ireland Civil Service which we will be able to achieve between 1984 and 1988 matches that which is to be achieved in comparable GB Departments. The targets are as follows:

<u>April 1984</u>	<u>April 1985</u>	<u>April 1986</u>	<u>April 1987</u>	<u>April 1988</u>
25,400	25,350	25,200	24,900	24,700

4. Given the differences of scale and the pressures which we face, for example in Social Security and Labour Market services, I consider that this is a satisfactory outcome. I will, of course, be keeping targets under review in the context of _____

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each annual Public Expenditure round.

5. If you are content I propose to announce the targets by way of an arranged Parliamentary Question.
6. I am copying this minute to Cabinet colleagues; Lord Gowrie and Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'J.P.' written in a stylized, cursive manner.

J.P.

15 February 1984

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FROM: CHIEF SECRETARY

DATE: 23 February 1984



PRIME MINISTER

NORTHERN IRELAND: CIVIL SERVICE MANPOWER AFTER 1984

I have seen the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland's minute of 15 February in which he proposes manpower targets for the Northern Ireland Civil Service. I have no formal responsibility for manpower control in the Northern Ireland Departments but I would like to make a couple of points.

2. While the targets would match the proposed reduction in comparable GB Departments, I think there is a case for going rather further than that. Leaving aside the civil servants performing functions in Northern Ireland which are performed by local authorities in GB, there will be $11\frac{1}{2}$ civil servants per thousand population in Northern Ireland on 1 April. In GB the comparable figures is 5 civil servants per thousand. I should add that these figures do not include civil servants involved in maintaining law and order, which is the responsibility of the separate Northern Ireland Office.

3. Northern Ireland certainly faces special political and economic problems and no doubt that justifies a higher ratio. However there has been a slow but progressive decline of terrorism and even though unemployment remains a serious problem the differential between GB and Northern Ireland has narrowed. Against that background, I doubt whether it is right to plan to maintain civil service manning levels in Northern Ireland at more than twice the level in GB until 1988.

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4. I am sending a copy of this to Jim Prior.

Isl. Greer

f. PETER REES

[Approved by the Chief Secy.]

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Civil Service Pt 15

Long Term Management

23 JAN 1984



Long Term Management

PRIME MINISTER

Attached is a minute from the Northern Ireland Secretary setting out manpower targets for the Northern Ireland Civil Service. These targets follow much the same lines as those for the comparable GB Departments. Also attached however is a minute from the Chief Secretary which presses for more stringent targets on the grounds that the ratio of civil servants to population is twice as high in Northern Ireland as in the rest of the country. He doubts whether it would be right to maintain civil service manning levels in Northern Ireland at twice the GB level until 1988.

Do you wish either:

- (i) to accept the Northern Ireland Secretary's manpower targets? or *Yes. ml*
- (ii) to press him along the lines of the Chief Secretary's note to seek more ambitious targets?
- DF*

24 February 1984

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

27 February, 1984

NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE MANPOWER

AFTER 1984

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 15 February about Northern Ireland Civil Service Manpower. She was also grateful to the Chief Secretary for his minute of 23 February.

The Prime Minister is content with the manpower targets set out in paragraph 3 of your Secretary of State's minute, and agrees that he should announce them by way of an arranged Parliamentary Question.

I am sending a copy of this letter to John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office), Paul Cann (Lord Gowrie's Office) and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

(David Barclay)

J. Lyon, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office

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